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Security Council

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Official communiqué of the 4163rd meeting of the Security Council

Held in private in the Security Council Chamber at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 21 June 2000, at 11.25 a.m.

At its 4163rd meeting, held in private on 21 June 2000 at 11.25 a.m., the Security Council considered the situation in Sierra Leone.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, the Security Council met with the delegation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Mediation and Security Council Committee of Six on Sierra Leone. The delegation was comprised of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mali (leader of the delegation), the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo, and the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Guinea to the United Nations, to whom invitations were extended in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure; and the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, who was invited in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

The members of the Security Council and of the Ministerial Committee had a full discussion of the current situation in Sierra Leone. They agreed that their common aim, in accordance with the objectives set out in the Lomé Agreement, was to restore stability and normality throughout Sierra Leone, putting an end to violence and encouraging reconciliation between all parties to the conflict.

Council members and the ECOWAS Committee condemned the continued detention by the RUF of United Nations peacekeepers of the Indian contingent of UNAMSIL, and the denial of freedom of movement to a large number of other United Nations personnel in the east of the country. They demanded the immediate and unconditional release of all United Nations personnel detained or surrounded, recalled the mandate given by the Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS to the President of Liberia to obtain the release of the remaining hostages and called on all leaders in the region to ensure this is brought about speedily.

It was the common position of members of the Security Council and members of the ECOWAS delegation that the terms of the Lomé Agreement have been flouted by the violation of the ceasefire, the attacks on UNAMSIL and the taking of

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hostages. With the help of appropriate inquiries, those identified as responsible should be brought to justice.

Members of the Security Council and the ECOWAS delegation expressed their concern about the humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone and called upon all parties to ensure safe and unhindered access of humanitarian assistance to those in need in Sierra Leone, in particular the refugees and displaced persons, women and children. They called upon all States, international and other organizations to provide urgent and substantial humanitarian assistance to the people of Sierra Leone.

Members of the Security Council commended the ECOWAS States for their enormous sacrifice and contribution to the cause of peace and stability in Sierra Leone and called on ECOWAS members to continue to support peacekeeping efforts in Sierra Leone.

The members of the ECOWAS delegation look to the United Nations to continue providing the Government of Sierra Leone with the necessary assistance to restore law and order in the country and resuming security control throughout the territory. Members of the Security Council informed the members of the ECOWAS delegation of ongoing discussion within the Security Council on draft resolutions concerning the strengthening of UNAMSIL, the control of diamond exports and arms imports and on the provision of justice.